



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

braries. How shall efficient, trained or experienced librarians be supplied in towns in which the library is open only two days a week, and the average librarian's annual salary amounts to \$150?

Because of existing conditions, the Free Public Library Commission of Massachusetts decided to try an experiment of a supervising librarian for a group of libraries in neighboring towns. The financial coöperation of the local library boards was sought. The commission's part was authorized by the law permitting direct aid to libraries in small towns. The scheme was similar in form to that of the Massachusetts Board of Education plan for district superintendents.

The commission's plan provided that a trained and wholly competent librarian be engaged to oversee the activities of librarians in a given neighborhood. She would work with full approval and in harmony with the boards of trustees, carry on library publicity work with teachers and pupils, clubs, societies, churches and seek to bring about closer relations between the libraries under their direction. Her efforts outside the library would be stressed quite as much as those inside and would be equally important.

This plan has worked out satisfactorily in some respects. The trustee of a large city library took three days each week of the time of the supervising librarian. At that library she gave instruction to the members of the staff in modern library methods, directed the work of recataloging and gave weekly instruction to school

children in the use of the library. She conducted classes for adults in literature and travel. The other days of the week were similarly occupied at small town libraries.

Some of the difficulties which come up in practice in trying to introduce such a system are these: It is our experience that in the small towns funds are so small for libraries that even if the salaries now being received by the several librarians were all put together they would not be enough to secure the quality of trained directorship which we have been giving. Again, many of the librarians have been in their positions for fifteen or twenty years, do not readily take to new methods, and still their removal is often a matter of great delicacy. Town politics are very individual and voters often manifest unwillingness to coöperate with outsiders, and there is an evident spirit of suspicion regarding attempts of this sort. In the case of supervising librarians it might be well worth while to find some bright local talent and train it up until such time as the supervising librarian shall be no longer needed.

Nevertheless it is hoped that the supervising librarian will supply the needed leaven in making the library of greater usefulness. If the scheme is worked out on a proper working basis, there is no reason why the number of such librarians should not be increased so that all sections of the state would be covered, and a noticeable upbuilding of library interests and work be felt.

THE TOWNSHIP AS A UNIT FOR LIBRARY EXTENSION

BY MAYME C. SNIPES, *Librarian, Plainfield (Ind.) Public Library*

The Plainfield Public Library has always been open to the township. In the early history of the library the tax was so meager that all the library could do for the rural patron was to encourage his patronage and to meet his needs as best it could whenever he came to the library.

But when the township law was amended and the minimum tax was raised to 5/10 of a mill, this gave new impetus for aiding the rural districts. From this time on rural extension began in earnest. Not the extension that we thought was ideal and most effective, for at this time house

to house service by means of a book-wagon was only a dream, a goal towards which we were striving. And until we could afford to make this dream a realization, deposit stations were maintained, using the home and school as the distributing centers.

This dream of ours kept coming before us. And the knowledge that the service through the deposit stations was not fully touching every home and never could, and the fact that the library was soon to open its doors to another township, caused the Board to consider the auto book service seriously.

Just a little over a year ago the auto service was put into action. We purchased a Ford chassis, equipped it with an electric starter, special horn, and other accessories. The special body was made by a local wagon-maker. The body is constructed with shelves on the sides, leaving a runway through the center for storage; a drop leaf is arranged on either side for writing and for charging and discharging the books. The body is entirely enclosed, glass being used in the doors. The capacity of the shelves is 200 books, but many more can be stored in the runway. The specials, or the books that have been asked for, are placed here. Also pictures and magazines which are loaned to families and to the schools.

The upkeep for this year has been very small, amounting only to \$83. The second year's expense will no doubt be very much greater, but if it should run as high as \$300 or \$400 the service will far overbalance the cost.

We are covering 78 square miles of territory, in July we add another township which will increase our territory to 128 square miles. We are reaching 66 per cent of the families and hope to increase the percentage this year. The total loan of books for this first year is 7,500, circulating on an average 135 books a trip.

We have six routes, making one trip a week, reaching every family every six weeks. In the meantime the neighbors may exchange books, always getting the

books back to the original borrower by the time the auto comes again. If the borrower wishes to return his books to the library in person or by parcel post and take others or have them sent, these being taken up at the end of the six weeks, he may do so.

Our plan is to use the book-wagon for all rural service. In reaching every family, delivering books to the schools and stations, and in every way possible making it useful to the people.

In organizing the service we made preliminary trips to familiarize ourselves with the roads and the people living on the main and cross roads, in order to plan permanent routes, numbering the houses on the map and entering the names of the families in the notebook. It took more time to tell the people about the service on the first trip than on any other. It was a new thing, if there is anything new under the sun. And since it has recently been revealed to us by Dr. Stephen Langdon that in 2,300 B. C. there were at Nippur parcel post and circulating libraries, we doubt there being anything new and believe that the old has just been buried a few centuries and has come to light again through the minds of men. But these folks had never heard of this kind of service and some were indifferent, some were too busy to read, and others would take books later. One woman's husband warned her to have nothing to do with the book-wagon for he knew there was a catch somewhere. He knew it could not be a something for nothing game. I agree with him on this point. It is only fair that the people should know who is paying for the service and the part they have in it. One man said that "if he was paying, he guessed he would use it." The majority thought to have books brought to their very doors every few weeks was going to be the very best thing that had come to the rural people. One woman told us that next to her boys, the library was the best thing in her life.

In July when we begin the organiza-

tion of another township, we will not have to go through the roll of explaining the how and why. They understand and the popularity of the service has spread like wildfire.

We are learning in our experience on the "open road" "how the other half lives." The folks seem to have a propensity for migrating every six weeks. We have never gone on a route a second time that we did not meet up with this condition. These folk are tenants and move from one farm to another, sometimes we find them on one route, other times on another, and again perhaps they have moved into the other township, or they have entirely disappeared. On the other hand, the majority of the patrons are wide awake, progressive people.

We urge the patrons to indicate to us the books they wish, either when we call, or by phone, or by post. The books are taken on the next trip, or if the want is urgent the books are sent immediately by mail and can reach the patron within twenty-four hours.

We have made every trip scheduled this year with the exception of six weeks in the middle of the winter. At this time the books were sent and returned by mail.

It is always a great disappointment if we do not arrive on the date planned. However, the patrons know if the weather is inclement we will arrive on the next fair day following date.

There are four very active country clubs in our community. We either make up a library on the subjects covering the year's work and place this collection in the hands of the president of the club for distribution and to be held until the end of the club year, or serve each member of the club directly from the library, the member notifying us ahead of time. The material is either taken to them on a regular trip or sent by mail. The library is largely responsible for the splendid coöperation there is between the town and country clubs, all working together for the best interests of the entire community.

The work with the rural schools has barely been mentioned, but for lack of time it will suffice to say that we do all we can to meet the needs and demand. This year we will have work with eighteen rural schools.

We are still dreaming dreams and seeing visions and will never rest until our entire county has the advantages of library extension.

A FLEXIBLE BOOK COLLECTION

BY JESSIE WELLES, *Toledo Public Library*

In our endeavor to reduce complexities, to study methods of reaching a desired end by the simplest, most direct means, the book collection is receiving its share of attention. Here the purpose or desired end is to meet the demands of a variety of patrons in a manner highly satisfactory to them by a system involving no unnecessary expenditure of time or service, which last two factors we estimate in terms of dollars. In short we strive to combine ideal service with practical economy. It is essential to keep both these points in view when planning short cuts and money-

saving schemes, for there is danger of robbing Peter to pay Paul. Simplification in the routine of the catalog or order department easily yields statistics of time saved, but who can calculate the prestige lost when such economies lead to slow or inaccurate service in the circulating department? Who can measure how many degrees the quality of library service drops when borrower and staff are irritated daily by a time-saving-in-the-catalog-room economy?

Early in this century the discussion of book collection problems involved ques-